

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 763

INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 1715

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT ID

SUBJ: MALIK AND SUDOMO ON POLITICAL DETAINEES

REF: A. JAKARTA 1635 (NOTAL) B. JAKARTA 1506 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY. FOREIGN MINISTER MALIK TOLD CHARGE THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT HOW LONG ARRESTS AND PRESS CLOSURES MADE IN WAKE OF TANAKA RIOTS WOULD LAST. MALIK REFERRED TO HIS OWN EFFORTS TO PERSUADE "THE GENERALS" THAT NEWSPAPERS AND INTELLECTUALS IN QUESTION WERE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR RIOTS. HE TOLD CHARGE THAT QUERIES FROM AMERICANS REGARDING DETENTIONS SHOULD BE DISCUSSED PRIVATELY WITH GOI AND ADVISED STRONGLY AGAINST RESORTING TO OFFICIAL PROTEST. MEANWHILE ADMIRAL SUDOMO ANNOUNCED THAT TOTAL OF 45 NOW DETAINED FOR SUSPECTED POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT IN RIOTS. END SUMMARY

1. DURING CALL ON MALIK FEBRUARY 7 CHARGE RAISED QUESTIONS OF NEWSPAPER CLOSURES AND DETENTIONS AND
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ASKED HIS ADVISE AS TO HOW EMBASSY SHOULD RESPOND

TO QUERIES FROM MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND OTHER AMERICANS ABOUT THE FATE OF THOSE DETAINED. MALIK SAID HE FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO RESPOND SINCE "NO ONE, INCLUDING THE GENERALS WHO GAVE THE ORDERS" KNOWS HOW LONG THESE MEASURES WILL CONTINUE. MALIK SAID HE HAD TRIED TO PERSUADE "THE GENERALS" THAT CLOSED NEWSPAPERS AND DETAINEES WERE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RIOTS, BUT HE SAID "THE GENERALS" WERE UNDERSTANDABLY SUSPICIOUS BECAUSE OF THEIR OWN BACKGROUND (APPARENTLY REFERRING TO EXPERIENCE OF 1965 COUP ATTEMPT.)

2. MALIK THEN SAID: "IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING RAISING AN OFFICIAL INQUIRY ABOUT THESE MATTERS, I WOULD STRONGLY ADVISE AGAINST IT." HE SAID A MORE FRUITFUL APPROACH WOULD BE FOR FOREIGN EMBASSIES INCLUDING THE US, TO PROVIDE HIM WITH THE NAMES OF INDIVIDUALS MAKING INQUIRIES ABOUT THE DETAINEES AND THE CLOSED NEWSPAPERS. HE COMMENTED IN A HALF JOKING VEIN THAT WHATEVER MIGHT HAPPEN TO MOST OF THE NEWSPAPERS, HE DOUBTED THAT NUSANTARA (ISLAMIC DAILY) WOULD EVER SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY AGAIN.

3. ACCORDING PRESS, ADMIRAL SUDOMO (CHIEF OF STAFF OF COMMAND FOR RESTORATION OF SECURITY AND ORDER-KOPKAMTIB) ANNOUNCED FEBRUARY 7 THAT 45 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN PLACED UNDER DETENTION THUS FAR FOR POLITICAL (AS OPPOSED TO CRIMINAL) INVOLVEMENT IN JAN 15-16 RIOTS. (HE DID NOT IDENTIFY THEM). HE SAID SOME WERE PICKED UP DURING RIOTS AND OTHERS AFTERWARDS. ACCORDING PRESS, SUDOMO REFUSED TO COMMENT WHEN ASKED IF DETAINEES WERE MEMBERS OF OUTLAWED MASYUMI (ISLAMIC) AND PSI (SOCIALIST) PARTIES. HE REPEATED THAT THOSE UNDER CUSTODY MAY NOW HAVE VISITS FROM RELATIVES. HE SAID HE WOULD MEET WITH PRESS NEXT WEEK TO ELABORATE FURTHER ON PROBLEM OF DETAINEES AND STRUCTURE OF KOPKAMTIB.

4. ON BASIS OF PREVIOUS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION, EMBASSY HAD PREVIOUSLY CALCULATED THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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ABOUT 35 INDIVIDUALS (MOSTLY STUDENT LEADERS, EX-STUDENT LEADERS AND INTELLECTUALS) WERE UNDER DETENTION FOR POSSIBLE POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT. WE KNEW IDENTITY OF APPROXIMATELY 27, ALTHOUGH AUTHORITIES HAVE THUS FAR NAMED ONLY 18. A FEW ARE ISLAMIC FIGURES BUT THE WEIGHT OF SUSPICION IS CLEARLY AGAINST THE "PSI" (OFTEN NOTHING MORE THAN A SHORT-HAND WAY OF REFERRING TO INDEPENDENT-MINDED WESTERNIZED

INTELLECTUALS).
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